



Commission of Food Security, Heritage, and Economy

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the Commission on Food Security, Heritage, and Economy and to the general public that the Commission will hold the following meeting which will be open to the public on:

Monday October 21, 2019, 8:30 a.m.

El Banco Building: Pima Country Housing Center
801 W Congress St, Tucson, Arizona

Legal Action Report

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 8:37 a.m.

Present:

Rani Olsen
Joy Hought
Kara Jones
Mike Peel
Doug Taren
Claudio Rodriguez
Ryan Clark
Pat Burns (staff support)

Absent:

Robert Ojeda
Dan McDonald
Marie Long
Erik Stanford
Loni Anderson

2. Approval of Minutes – September 16th, 2019

Claudio made a motion to approve the minutes. Erik seconded. The vote to approve the minutes was unanimous.

3. Announcements

Speakers today are Neil Saunders from the Climate commission and Elizabeth Warberten Smith from Community Gardens of Tucson.

4. Discussion: Recap of Tucson Meet Yourself

Doug: Tucson Meet Yourself took an hour, spoke about what the commission does, food security, pulled in Jonathan Mabry who did 10 minutes on the city of gastronomy. Community and School gardens were also brought up.

Rani: Doug, Rani and Vanessa from the Health Dept were the speakers. One question for the crowd was how do they engage in the local food system? Access to info on commercial kitchens was a big topic as well. Some people were curious for more info.

Doug: Feedback to Jonathan Mabry about city of gastronomy was to have badges for restaurants that complete the steps to be certified. Also a discussion on improving food system and the marketing of local foods, maybe Local First can help with that?

Erik: There is some research on developing a local food brand.

Kara: New Mexico has a statewide branding campaign for food.

Mike: Can talk in future about green business leaders program based on scale up for businesses to become more green.

Doug: Is there a fee?

Mike: Yes but it can be waived.

5. Guest Presentation: Elizabeth Warberten Smith

Elizabeth from Community Gardens of Tucson spoke, the first community garden in Tucson was in 1989, there are now more than 20, some are in schools. Rani asked what the goals, vision and values of are the org. Elizabeth answered with a philosophy to foster local food at large and small level, they've been a 501c3 since 1995, they offer scholarships and a lot of refugees help out in the gardens.

Doug asked if there are any new gardens in the last 2 year. Elizabeth said there was 1.

Elizabeth continued saying that years ago there was a grant that helped 7 gardens get started. Sometimes they just help start a garden and turn it over to a group to maintain. They work with BICAS, UA students and interns. They have 3 employees, all part time, also work with IRC, all walks of life participate in the gardens though.

Rani asked if there are any obstacles. Elizabeth said they have a board of 6 people with 2 or 3 committees, a lot of people don't know about the org so they do a lot with a little as it's hard to get the word out. Their annual budget is \$49 to \$60k, need more funding for sure, need to recruit more people. They have recently signed on with a group called Catch a Fire that give resources to nonprofits which has helped out a lot.

When a garden begins, they provide the plot, soil, irrigation, education. Some gardens are open to all, some of them give extra food to shelters and the food bank. Most of the budget goes to the water bills, they worked with Tucson water for a special water rate but only 3 of the gardens qualified.

Rani asked if they have ideas on how to increase capacity. Elizabeth responded that the Catch a Fire grant is helping, they're trying to create more partnerships and collaborations as well. They'll look for new grants in the future and fix the website. They're also doing a cost per plot evaluation.

Rani asked how they're reaching out to others. Elizabeth responded that groups usually reach out to them but they are being more proactive lately.

Doug said that during urban ag regulation talks, the argument was made that community gardens increase crime in an area. TPD has said that's not the case.

6. Guest Presentation: Neil Saunders with the Climate Commission for the CoT

Rani asked what the goals and values are of the commission. Neil said it's to implement plan Tucson in the most efficient way with climate values and goals in mind. That can be difficult for people to wrap their heads around, they're now looking at city operations, efficiency on city buildings for example. In July they had a retreat with a facilitator, helpful to figure out how to move forward as a commission. They have 4 subcommittees, accountability, solid waste, education, electrification and transportation. They have come up with a rubric on how to make decisions, has values in equity, transformational vs. trans actual.

Doug asked if they've pitched any ordinances to M&C. Neil said yes, an EV plug ordinance has been talked about, not made it to a study session yet. Also trying to help with recycling. M&C approved ways for city departments to improve their recycling. They've asked to have a person in the city to be assigned to work on these issues with the commission.

Rani asked when the commission began. Neil responded with 2017 he's not sure if he'll be reappointed, they have another retreat in February 2020.

Rani asked who else is on the commission. Neil said the CEO of Changemaker, Vanessa from Recyco, a retired professor who helped start Civano, Robert Bulicek, someone from TEP and Sergio Javila a biologist.

Rani asked about any impediments. Neil said coordination is tough because they're all volunteers, the diversity is decent though.

Rani asked about ideas on overcoming challenges, Neil responded with one challenge was that the direction was vague but the climate action plan gives them a focus for the future. It could work on both commissions as well.

Rani said maybe some food policies could be built into the climate action plan.

7. Future Agenda Items

Rani said next meeting will likely be in December instead of November, a Doodle poll will be sent to members. Joy said maybe the commission can map out resources and find gaps. Claudio said to find a person who can make it if they cannot. Rani said in future they can figure out the capacity of the commission.

8. Call to the Audience

There were no audience members.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 a.m.